

In the Claims:

1-28. (Canceled)

29. (New) A method comprising:

- (a) capturing attribute information from an operator;
- (b) under control of said operator, capturing subject information from a subject distinct from said operator; and
- (c) encoding data related to said captured attribute information in subject data related to the captured subject information.

30. (New) The method of claim 29 wherein the captured attribute information comprises biometric information useful in identifying the operator.

31. (New) The method of claim 29 wherein the captured attribute information comprises an image of an identifying characteristic of the operator.

32. (New) The method of claim 29 wherein (c) occurs immediately following (b), and without operator intervention.

33. (New) The method of claim 29 wherein the encoded data is statistically unique to said operator.

34. (New) The method of claim 29 wherein new attribute information is captured each time subject information is captured.

35. (New) The method of claim 29 that further includes processing said captured attribute information to yield data that is encoded in the subject data.

36. (New) The method of claim 35 that includes hashing the captured attribute information, and encoding resulting hash data in said subject data.

37. (New) The method of claim 29 wherein (a) comprises capturing optical attribute information using an arrangement employing a first optical path, and (b) comprises capturing optical information from said subject using an arrangement employing a second optical path, said second optical path being non-identical to the first.

38. (New) The method of claim 37 wherein the first and second optical paths terminate at a common image sensor.

39. (New) The method of claim 29 wherein (a) and (b) comprise capturing with different sensors.

40. (New) The method of claim 39 wherein at least one of said sensors comprises an audio transducer.

41. (New) The method of claim 39 wherein both of said different sensors comprise image sensors.

42. (New) The method of claim 29 wherein the captured attribute information comprises retinal scan information.

43. (New) The method of claim 29 wherein the captured attribute information comprises fingerprint scan information.

44. (New) The method of claim 29 wherein said encoding comprises steganographic encoding.

45. (New) A computer readable medium on which is stored software for performing the method of claim 29.

46. (New) An apparatus for practicing the method of claim 29.

47. (New) A camera device for practicing the method of claim 29, said camera device including an eyepiece and optics for capturing retinal information from an eye of the operator.

48. (New) In a digital camera that includes an optical system for imaging a subject onto a photosensor array, and processing circuitry for producing image output data therefrom, an improvement comprising:

an operator attribute capture system for capturing biometric information associated with an operator of said camera, said attribute capture system including one or more elements in addition to said optical system; and

a system for automatically associating data produced by said operator attribute capture system with said image output data.

49. (New) A method comprising:

(a) receiving content data representing electronic content;

(b) decoding identification data from the received content data, said identification data comprising biometric information captured from an operator of equipment that originally captured said electronic content, which has been algorithmically processed to yield a more compact representation; and

(c) checking said decoded identification data for correspondence with reference data.

50. (New) The method of claim 49 wherein (c) comprises checking said decoded identification data to identify the operator.

51. (New) The method of claim 49 that includes capturing biometric information from the operator, and processing said to obtain said reference data.

52. (New) The method of claim 49 wherein said decoding comprises steganographic decoding.

53. (New) The method of claim 49 wherein said biometric information comprises retinal scan information.

54. (New) The method of claim 49 wherein said biometric information comprises fingerprint information.

55. (New) The method of claim 49 in which (c) includes checking the decoded identification data against plural reference data, each associated with information about a different operator, to thereby identify a particular operator who operated the equipment that captured said content.

56. (New) A computer readable medium on which is stored software for performing the method of claim 49.